

can safely walk or ride their bicycles to school. I hope Congress passes my program this year, but whether or not it does, I am comforted to know that 500,000 AAA patrollers across the Nation will be working hard to keep the streets around our schools safe.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR JEFFORDS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I spoke on the floor last week to briefly recount some of the many reasons that Vermont and the Nation will miss the leadership, the independence and the decency of Senator JIM JEFFORDS when he chooses to retire from the Senate at the end of his current term.

Since then there have been many news articles and editorials that have also catalogued and described various aspects of JIM JEFFORDS' distinguished legacy. As is often the case when he writes about the events and issues of the day, Emerson Lynn, the publisher of the St. Albans Messenger in my home State of Vermont, did this particularly well. I would like to share his editorial with the members of the Senate.

I ask unanimous consent that Emerson Lynn's recent editorial about Senator JEFFORDS be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the St. Albans Messenger, Apr. 21, 2005]

JEFFORDS LEAVES BEFORE HIS TIME, ACCOMPLISHES MUCH

Senator Jim Jeffords, who turned Washington's political world upside down 4 years ago with his defection from the Republican Party, Wednesday turned Vermont's political world upside down with his announcement not to seek reelection.

He said it was time to begin a new chapter in a life that for 38 years has been dominated by an election cycle that began as a state senator from Rutland in 1967, to Attorney General in 1969, to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1974 to the United States Senate in 1988. He has represented Vermont in one office or another for almost four decades. If that is a chapter, most our lives can be explained in a paragraph.

Wednesday's announcement was the sad affirmation of what many of those close to the Senator had feared: his health is less than optimum and his wife, Liz, is battling cancer and about to undergo a third round of chemotherapy. At some point the question is more akin to the clap of thunder to our better senses: is being senator worth one's health; is it worth not being able to pay the proper attention to one's wife who is battling cancer, and, is the twilight of one's life best spent with one's children, and an expected grandchild, or with the churlish likes of Tom DeLay and the hard right that have stolen a sense of civility and class from the Senate? For anyone not suffering from the hubris that often comes attached to the position, the choice is clear and Jim Jeffords made that choice with grace and perspective.

He also did the honorable thing politically. He announced his retirement with sufficient time for both parties to give thoughtful consideration as to how to approach the November 2006 race. He could have waited. He didn't, and in so doing reinforced the integrity that has characterized his career.

And his has been a remarkable career. The history books will undoubtedly begin their biographies noting the impact of his May, 2001 decision to bolt from a Republican party he said had left its moorings. But the senator's accomplishments extend far beyond one's party allegiance. As Vermont's attorney general he played a pivotal role in the implementation of Act 250, and the law to outlaw billboards. No Vermont politician has had a greater impact on dairy farming, nor does any politician have a better understanding of the industry and its needs. There isn't a single bit of legislation dealing with special education [or education in general] that doesn't have his fingerprints on it in one fashion or another. The same can be said of his years in the Senate when dealing with the environment. He was also a passionate defender of the arts. What he has accomplished will endure beyond fame's notoriously short life.

It's axiomatic that this was not the choreographed conclusion of his choosing. His desire was to win reelection as an independent, thereby vindicating a personally wrenching decision to leave the Republican Party. Life's bows cannot be so neatly tied and those who try find them but ropes of sand that disintegrate in the twisting.

Sadly, we are in an age that exploits one's natural fissures as though they were fatal flaws of one's character. One's vulnerabilities are extrapolated into insurmountable deficiencies, as if there were only sun and no shadows, all light, no darkness. The senator knows only too well how that game is played. The Yale/Harvard educated man will be known more for a twisted tongue than a clear mind, as if being articulate were a higher calling than being thoughtful.

In the end, it's not what others think of you but the joy you carry in your toil. And, in the end, it is Mr. Jeffords that wears the smile, not his accusers. He is like Sisyphus in Albert Camus' "Myth of Sisyphus", the character in Greek mythology who was condemned for eternity to roll a boulder up a hill, only to have it roll back down again. Camus made the convincing argument that Sisyphus' lot was not tragic, but uplifting. He could smile at the absurd because he understood it as such.

Camus concluded by writing: "I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One I always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy."

We imagine Mr. Jeffords' heart is full and that he is happy. He should be remembered as such.

The clamor to claim his political perch has begun and din, at times, will overwhelm. What Vermonters can hope for is that all followers choose Mr. Jeffords' path of integrity and independence.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge and commemorate April 24, 2005, the 90th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide and to urge all Americans to join together to ensure that these crimes never happen again.

On April 24, 1915, the Ottoman Empire began arresting hundreds of Arme-

nian intellectuals, most of whom were subsequently executed. What soon followed can only be described as a tragedy that shocked the human conscience: by some estimates, over a million Armenians were killed, and another 500,000 were driven from their homes. These events marked the 20th century's first experience with such atrocities, and, sadly, they would not be the last.

Maya Angelou, the famous poet and civil rights activist once said:

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

Indeed it is our duty to remember this horrific tragedy, and face the crimes of humanity with unflinching determination, courage, and moral fortitude so that they never happen again.

As a country founded on the principles of justice, equality, and liberty, the United States must take a leadership role in preventing genocide.

I am proud that the Armenian American community in my home State of California—over 500,000 strong—has taken such a leadership role in ensuring that the U.S. lives up to its values by acknowledging the crimes of the past and taking action against the crimes of the present and future. Their determination and perseverance is a testament to the human spirit and the ability to overcome injustice and build a better tomorrow.

Today, we stand with the Armenian American community in commemorating the start of the Armenian Genocide, and together we stand with those around the world who face persecution and even death simply because of who they are. They must know they are not alone and those who commit these crimes must know we are watching.

We will never forget the Armenian Genocide as we look to the future with courage and determination.

FEDERAL REFUSAL CLAUSE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I oppose the Federal refusal clause. The Republican leadership was wrong to include such a broad refusal clause in the fiscal year 2005 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The clause was never voted on by the Senate Appropriations Committee; it was inserted into the bill behind closed doors.

The clause would allow health care firms to refuse to comply with existing Federal, State, and local laws and regulations that pertain to abortion services, counseling, and referrals.

Supporters of the clause claim it simply clarifies existing law. But far from clarifying it, sweeping new changes would be enacted that would be devastating to women's health.

The reality is that no Federal law forces individuals to provide abortion care. The Church amendment, adopted in 1973, enacted a new refusal clause. It explicitly protects individuals who object to providing abortion because of their religious beliefs or moral convictions. Broader refusal clauses, such as